



PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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MAN SENTENCED FOR TRAPPING AND KILLING VULTURES

FT. MYERS - United States Magistrate Judge Douglas N. Frazier sentenced Richard W. Beck, age 45, of Lakeport, Florida, owner and operator of Beck's Gator Farm, to two years' probation and fined him \$5,000, for the unlawful taking and killing of migratory birds, that is Black Vultures and Turkey Vultures.

Pursuant to a plea agreement with the government, Mr. Beck was ordered to pay \$5,000 in restitution to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. The foundation funds projects and grants benefitting federally protected trust wildlife species.

Previously, on February 20, 2002, two other Glades County residents, Michael Theodore Harvey, and William Warren Watson, who were employed by Beck, were sentenced to probation and ordered to perform community service after having pled guilty to the same violation and an additional violation of the Endangered Species Act.

This case was investigated by Special Agents of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and officers of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Jeffrey F. Michelland of the Fort Myers Division of the United States Attorney's Office.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish and wildlife and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, and conserves and restores wildlife habitat.

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